

The winter, variously described as the worst since 1963 or 1947 or on record, now seems to be over. We here were luckier than folk in most places; but burst pipes are burst pipes wherever they occur!

Social Activities

Our recent events have been welcomed. The beetle drive in October was in the nature of a fun evening, and the grand 1960's party at the Ship in November was enjoyed by what sports commentators would call a capacity crowd. January brought a fascinating talk, illustrated with excellent tapes, by Richard Birley on the numerous composers associated with Vienna; and in February Ivor Nicholls' talk and demonstration on life-saving, injuries etc was informative and useful. Many thanks to the organisers, to the landlords of the Springhead and the Ship, and to all who came to these functions.

A coming event - St George's Day (Thursday 23 April), Barbeque and Fireworks at the Springhead. Further details nearer the time, but make a note now.

Last autumn we mooted the possibility of an Open Gardens weekend, on the lines of those in nearby villages. Likely support was, however, such that the Committee had to abandon the idea.

Bus Service

The hourly service between Sutton Poyntz and Weymouth promised by Weybus, as outlined in the last Newsletter, worked well for a time but then became erratic and unreliable. When the Committee talked to Mr Charlton, proprietor of Weybus, last September about the service, they told him that he should not expect every bus from the village to carry passengers; but he hoped that, taken overall, the service would prove viable, especially as it covers Littlemoor as well. The Society informed Mr Charlton of the inconvenience caused by the irregular running of the buses and on 22 January he wrote apologising for the difficulties; he said that in some weeks an average of only 10 people had used the buses from the Springhead and he had therefore been obliged to seek the approval of the Traffic Commissioners to a revised timetable - this has been displayed in the Society's notice-board at the Cartshed since the end of January. Briefly, buses will leave the pub (for Weymouth) at 0818, 0957, 1257 and 1757, and the Statue (for the village) at 0930, 1230 and 1730 hours, assuming the Commissioners' consent.

...../ P.T.O.

SUTTON POYNTZ SOCIETY : COMMITTEE 1987/88

Nominee's name:

Address:

Proposed by: Seconded by:

Signed by nominee, indicating willingness to serve:

Planning

Not for the first time, the Committee has recently been asked to consider, in effect, our attitude towards planning applications submitted to the Borough Council for development within the village or sufficiently close as to have a substantial impact on it. Comments like "Why has the Society not been able to prevent all this development?" and, on the other hand, "What right have you to interfere in the way people wish to develop their property?" show the dilemma facing bodies like the Society; almost a "can't win" situation, isn't it? The Society is not the planning authority; the Borough Council are. What the S.P.S. Committee does is to offer any necessary comments on planning applications, and in doing so they pay regard to such things as the zoning of the land in the development plan, what is the effect of the restrictions imposed in the conservation area (which does not cover all the village), what are the surrounding characteristics, and so on. The aims of the Society, settled in 1968 and never really questioned since, are "to make every effort to maintain and improve the beauty of the village .. in an effort to protect the area from unnecessary or undesirable development". Doesn't some group of people have to use their best endeavours to pursue that sensible aim? Let us hear more about this at the A.G.M.

Planning applications received by the Council are advertised almost weekly in the Echo. Members of the Society do sometimes tell a Committee member what they think about an application - more such comment will always be welcome. The fact that the Society may comment to the Council on a particular application does not preclude individuals from submitting their own views to the Council, of course; some do so.

As regards "national" planning, statements in February by Government ministers about a revised policy for development of agricultural land could be worrying. There has no doubt been some over-reaction in sections of the media, but the C.P.R.E., to which the Society is affiliated, is rightly anxious. In one press interview, the Secretary of State for the Environment said he was trying to produce a coherent policy for the future; he is quoted as saying: "I am not allowing a lot more land to come forward in the South, but I am endeavouring to restore derelict areas in the North. Why shouldn't development take place there, where I don't think the same conditions apply as in the green fields of Hampshire?" - (Presumably he might have said Dorset instead of Hampshire). We shall certainly need to keep a watch on pronouncements coming from the corridors of power which are of vital concern to all of us.

Annual General Meeting. Please note the date and come along to voice your comments, criticisms, ideas, compliments or whatever. The meeting is on

Tuesday, 31 March at 7.30pm in the Springhead Pavilion.

Refreshments will be provided. The Committee for the coming year will be elected; a nomination paper appears overleaf. Nominations should be received by the Secretary (Millstream Cottage, Sutton Road), by 27 March, please.